

GOVERNANCE

BASEL INSTITUTE ON GOVERNANCE

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ABSTRACT

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Based on Médecins Sans Frontières's (MSF) medical field experience, Dr Karim Laouabdia's presentation will take HIV/AIDS as an illustration of today's shortcomings in terms of life-saving medications.

MSF is faced with increasing first line drugs resistance among its HIV patients, which poses problems both in terms of diagnostics – lack of cheap and easy to use diagnostic tools to measure the amount of HIV virus in the blood – and treatments. Indeed, resistance to first line drugs requires to switch to second line drugs, and with the full implementation of the TRIPS agreement in India as of the beginning of 2005, generics competition can no longer drive prices down. This means that the new generation of ARVs will be priced out of the reach of the majority of poor people.

In addition, treating children is more difficult and expensive than treating adults, as MSF doctors lack diagnostic tools as well as medicines adapted to their specific needs. This situation stems from the configuration of the R&D system which is primarily driven by commercial interests. However, in the "innovation cycle", access issues have to be integrated from the beginning in the R&D process.

Eventually, the development of an innovative diagnostics tool will be presented.